

(12) UK Patent Application (19) GB (11) 2 293 573 (13) A

(43) Date of A Publication 03.04.1996

(21) Application No 9519647.3

(22) Date of Filing 27.09.1995

(30) Priority Data

(31) 08316181

(32) 30.09.1994

(33) US

(71) Applicant(s)

Kimberley-Clark Corporation

(Incorporated in USA - Delaware)

PO Box 349, 401 North Lake Street, Neenah,
Wisconsin 54957-0349, United States of America

(72) Inventor(s)

Duane Girard Uitenbroek

Kathleen Ann O'Rourke

(74) Agent and/or Address for Service

Frank B Dehn & Co

Imperial House, 15-19 Kingsway, LONDON,
WC2B 6UZ, United Kingdom

(51) INT CL⁶

B32B 3/30, B29C 59/04, B32B 27/12

(52) UK CL (Edition O)

B5N N0330 N0526 N175 N177 N178 N18X N180 N182
N195 N196 N207 N209 N21Y N212 N223 N225 N237
N244 N255 N257 N259 N26X N260 N261 N264 N267
N27Y N2712 N273 N28Y N281 N283 N288 N401 N402
N419 N42X N42Y N420 N422 N426 N46X N486 N478
N479 N500 N519 N52X N52Y N534 N536 N537 N56Y
N561 N564 N565 N566 N567 N569 N57X N57Y N570
N577 N578 N579 N58Y N593 N648 N650 N658 N66Y
N661 N662 N666 N670 N690 N70X N703 N712 N734
N738 N764 N784

A5R RPV

B6J JB2 J204 J803

U1S S1122 S1138

(56) Documents Cited

GB 1265483 A

GB 1070514 A

(58) Field of Search

UK CL (Edition N) B5N, B6J JB2 JB7

INT CL⁶ B29C 59/04, B32B 3/26 3/30 27/12, B41M

5/124

ONLINE:WPI, CLAIMS

(54) Laminate material and absorbent garment comprising the same

(57) A laminated material (10), which may be used in an absorbent garment, comprises a first layer of material (12) and a second layer of material (14). The first layer of material includes opaque areas (16) and transparent areas (18). The second layer of material has a coloration which is different than the first layer of material and is adjacent the first layer of material so that the coloration of the second layer of material is visible through the transparent areas (18) of the first layer of material.

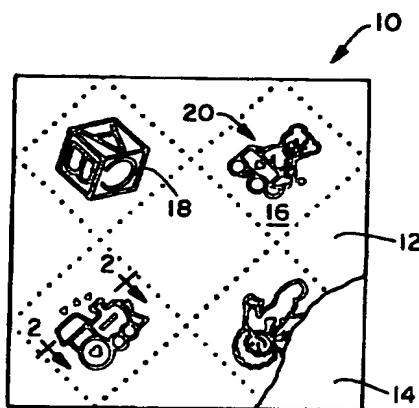


FIG. 1

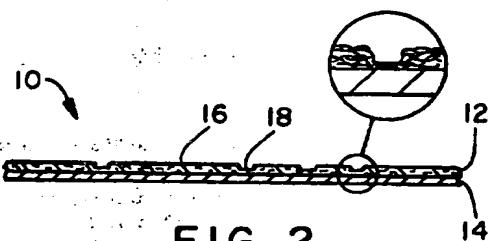


FIG. 2

GB 2 293 573 A

BEST AVAILABLE COPY

1/1

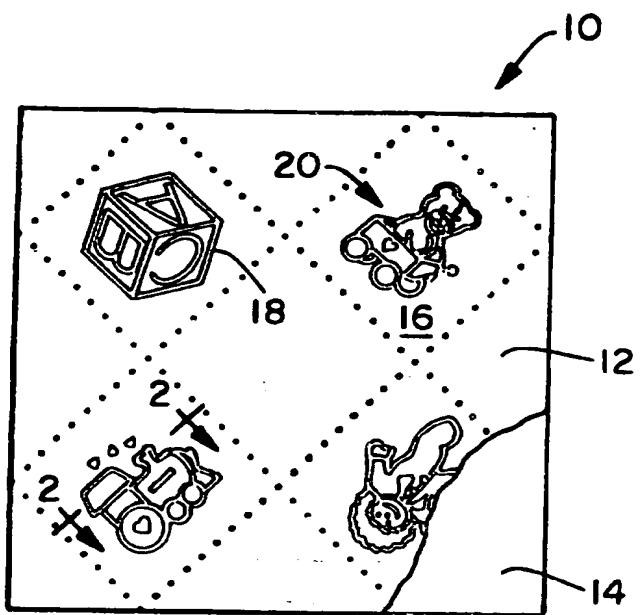


FIG. 1

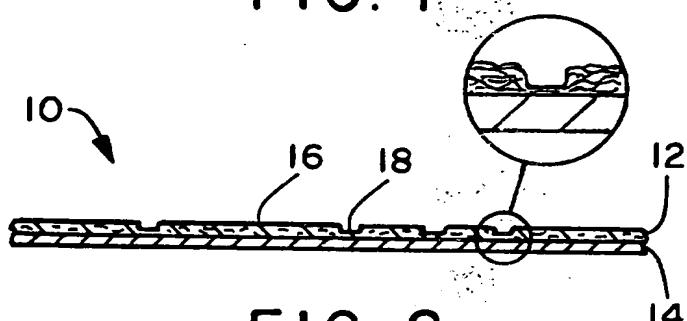


FIG. 2

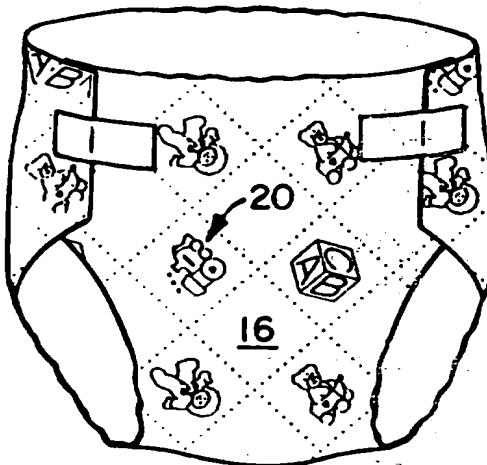


FIG. 3

2293573

- 1 -

LAMINATE MATERIAL AND ABSORBENT GARMENT COMPRISING SAME

Absorbent garments such as disposable diapers, training pants, adult
5 incontinence products, feminine care products and the like are known. The external surfaces of many such absorbent products comprise a nonwoven fibrous material or a film material. In many instances, it is desirable to have indicia, such as lettering or figures, appear on the exterior surfaces of such products. Unfortunately, it is often
10 difficult to provide such indicia on the materials which typically form the external surfaces (including the outer surface and body contacting surface) of such products.

It has been proposed to print the desired indicia on the films or
15 nonwoven materials which form the external surfaces of such products. Printing on many film and nonwoven surfaces is difficult and often requires additional time and expense in the form of chemical or physical treatments.

20 It has also been proposed to emboss color-contrasting materials together such that, in the areas of such embossing, color variations are seen. In this manner, indicia can be provided in a manner other than printing.

25 Nonetheless, it is desirable to provide alternative methods of providing indicia on the external surfaces of absorbent products such as those discussed above. It is to this goal that the present invention is directed.

In one aspect, the present invention relates to a laminate material. The laminate material comprises a first layer of material having opaque areas, transparent areas and a coloration. The laminate further comprises a second layer of material adjacent said first layer of material. The second layer of material has a different coloration than said first layer of material, whereby the coloration of said second layer of material is visible through said transparent areas of said first layer of material to a greater extent than through said opaque areas of said first layer of material.

In another aspect, the present invention concerns a disposable absorbent garment. The garment comprises a bodyside liner; an outer cover and an absorbent core located between said bodyside liner and said outer cover. The outer cover comprises a laminate material. The laminate material comprises a first layer of material having opaque areas, transparent areas and a coloration. The laminate further comprises a second layer of material adjacent said first layer of material. The second layer of material has a different coloration than the first layer of material, whereby the coloration of the second layer of material is visible through said transparent areas of said first layer of material to a greater extent than through said opaque areas of said first layer of material.

In a final aspect, the present invention concerns a disposable absorbent garment. The garment comprises a bodyside liner, an outer cover and an absorbent core located between said bodyside liner and said outer cover. The bodyside liner comprises a laminate material. The laminate material comprises a first layer of material having opaque areas, transparent areas and a coloration. The laminate material further comprises a second layer of material adjacent said first layer of material. The second layer of material has a different coloration than said first layer of material, whereby the coloration of the second layer of material is visible through said transparent areas of said first layer of material to a greater extent than through said opaque areas of said first layer of material.

Embodiments of the invention will now be described by way of example only and with reference to the accompanying drawings in which:

Fig. 1 illustrates a top plan view of a laminate material according to the present invention.

5 Fig. 2 illustrates a cross-sectional view of the laminate illustrated in Fig. 1 taken along line 2-2 of Fig. 1.

Fig. 3 illustrates the laminate illustrated in Fig. 1 in position on a disposable infant diaper.

10

In a first aspect, the present invention relates to a laminate material. The laminate material comprises a first layer of material and a second layer of material. The first layer of material has opaque areas and transparent areas. As used herein, the word "opaque" refers to a material which generally inhibits the passage of light such that written or printed indicia located opposite the opaque material is generally not visible to the naked eye. As a general rule, a material will be considered to be opaque when it has a light transmission of less than or equal to about 80 percent, alternatively of from about 40 to about 70 percent, alternatively of less than about 40 percent. As used herein, the word "transparent" refers to a material through which light readily passes such that written or printed indicia located opposite the transparent material can be viewed by the naked eye. As a general rule, a material will be considered to be transparent when it has a light transmission of greater than about 50 percent, alternatively greater than about 80 or 90 percent, alternatively from about 50 to about 100 percent.

30 The transparent areas of the first layer of material suitably have a light transmission at least 10 percent, alternatively at least 30 percent, alternatively from 20 to 90 percent greater than the light transmission of the opaque areas of the first layer of material.

35

The light transmission of a material, such as the opaque and transparent areas of the first layer of material, is suitably determined by BYK Gardener as set forth in ASTM - D2244-85.

5 Any material possessing the described opaque areas and transparent areas is believed suitable for use as the first layer of material in the present invention. The first layer of material is suitably formed from nonwoven materials, woven or knit materials, open or closed cell foam materials, or film materials. The first layer of
10 material may be a single layer of material or may, itself, be a laminate material.

Suitable nonwoven materials include fibrous nonwoven materials formed by a carding process, or a spunbond process, or meltblown process
15 whereby molten polymeric material is extruded through a die, attenuated to lengthen the extruded polymer into fibers and decrease the diameter thereof and is subsequently deposited on a forming surface. Methods of forming such nonwoven materials are known to those skilled in the art. Polymeric materials suitable for use in
20 forming such fibrous nonwoven materials include polyolefins such as polyethylene and propylene, polyesters, nylons, ethylene vinyl acetate, ethylene methacrylate, copolymers of the above materials, block copolymers such as A-B-A block copolymers of styrene and butadiene, and the like. In order to render the fibrous nonwoven
25 material opaque, it is generally desired to provide the nonwoven materials with a relatively high surface area. Such high surface area is suitably accomplished by forming the nonwoven material from fibers having a denier of less than about 2.0d, alternatively of less than about 1.0d. The nonwoven materials should suitably have a
30 surface area of at least about 0.3 square meters per gram, alternatively of at least about 0.5 square meters per gram, still further, alternatively of from about 0.6 to about 1.5 square meters per gram. The higher the surface area, the more opaque the nonwoven material will generally appear. The surface area of the fibrous
35 nonwoven materials is suitably determined by the physical gas adsorption (B.E.T.) method of Brunauer, Emmet, and Teller, Journal of American Chemical Society, Vol 60, 1938, p 309, as standardized in

ASTM D 4820-92a. The multi-point (5 points), static volumetric method is used with krypton as the adsorption gas and 90°C as the preliminary drying temperature. The analyses were performed by Micromeritics Instrument Corporation, Norcross, Georgia, under their 5 test designation # 260/65000/00 using an automatic DigiSorb 2600 instrument.

As will be explained in greater detail below, the transparent areas present in the first layer of material are generally provided by 10 physical treatment of areas of an opaque first layer of material to render said areas transparent. Accordingly, some known methods of rendering nonwoven and film materials opaque are not suitable for use in the present invention. This is because it is generally not possible to subsequently render such opaque materials transparent.

15 In one embodiment of the present invention, the fibrous nonwoven materials are rendered opaque due to their high surface area. This allows opaque areas of the nonwoven material to be rendered transparent by application of heat and/or pressure to soften or melt the material forming the nonwoven opaque areas, thus, transforming the fibrous nonwoven material into a filmlike material, which film is transparent. Specifically, the surface area of the nonwoven material is reduced by at least about 25 percent, alternatively by at least 20 about 40 percent, alternatively of from about 50 to about 90 percent 25 based on the surface area of the opaque areas prior to application of heat and/or pressure.

30 Alternatively, the first layer of material may comprise a film or open or closed cell foam material. Suitable film or foam materials are cast or extruded films or foams formed from polyolefins such as polyethylene and propylene, polyesters, nylons, ethylene vinyl acetate, ethylene methacrylate, copolymers of the above materials, 35 block copolymers such as A-B-A block copolymers of styrene and butadiene, and the like. Again, the films and foams suitable for use in the present invention should have a generally opaque character and should be capable of being rendered transparent through the application of heat, pressure, or the like. Thus, the films and

foams cannot generally be rendered opaque through certain known means such as by incorporating in such films coloring agents or pigments.

Methods of providing film material with a high surface area include 5 embossing, creating micropores, and the like. One method for creating micropores in films includes adding a noncompatible particulate material to the polymeric material from which the film is to be made, making the film and stretching the film to eliminate or reduce the bond between the polymeric material from which the film is 10 made and the particulate material.

It is particularly desired that the film or foam material suitable for use as the first layer of material have a surface area of at least about 0.3 square meters per gram, alternatively of at least 15 about 0.5 square meters per gram, and more particularly of from about 0.6 to about 1.5 square meters per gram. The surface area of a film is suitably determined by physical gas adsorption (B.E.T.) described above.

20 The first layer of material suitably has a basis weight of from about 5.0 grams per square meter to about 100 grams per square meter, alternatively of from about 10 to about 50 grams per square meter, more particularly of from about 14 to about 30 grams per square meter. Naturally, the degree of opacity of the first layer of 25 material will be affected, to some degree, by the thickness of the first layer. Thus, obtaining the desired degree of opacity can be achieved by controlling the surface area and thickness of the first layer of material.

30 The first layer of material is treated to provide it with transparent areas having a basis weight greater than 0. As discussed above, such treatment generally consists of applying thermal energy through a discontinuous heat bonding, sonic bonding, or pressure embossing operation. The application of thermal energy causes the material 35 from which the first layer of material is formed to soften or melt. This allows certain areas of the first layer of material to be formed into areas which are transparent. This application of thermal energy

reduces the surface area of the areas so treated and, thus, renders them less opaque.

Other methods of providing a first layer of opaque material with
5 transparent areas may be apparent to those skilled in the art. For
example, it may be possible to provide the first layer with an opaque
nature through the addition of a thermally or pressure sensitive
pigment such that subsequent application of heat or pressure
transforms the pigment into a transparent form, thus, allowing for
10 the formation of transparent areas. Of course, the reverse is also
possible. The thermally or pressure sensitive pigment could become
opaque upon application of heat or pressure, thus, allowing for the
formation of opaque areas.

15 The laminate material of the present invention further comprises a
second layer of material adjacent said first layer of material. As
used herein, the second layer of material will be considered to be
adjacent the first layer of material when the second layer of
material can be viewed through the transparent areas of the first
20 layer of material. Generally, the first and second layers of
material will be in an overlapping superimposed relationship.
Nonetheless, it may be possible to interpose various layers of
material between the first layer of material and the second layer of
material.

25 The second layer of material has a different coloration than the
first layer of material. That is, the colors of the first and second
layers of material are contrasting such that when the second layer of
material is viewed through the transparent areas of the first layer
30 of material, the pattern of transparent areas is readily apparent.
Typically, the second layer of material will be of a darker
coloration than the first layer of material. In one specific
embodiment, the first layer of material has a white coloration in the
35 opaque areas and is colorless in the transparent areas. The second
layer of material has a color other than white such that the
coloration of the second material can be viewed through the
transparent areas of the first layer of material to a greater extent

than through the opaque areas of the first layer of material. In a preferred embodiment, the second layer of material can be viewed through the transparent areas of the first layer of material and not through the opaque areas of the first layer of material. The second 5 layer of material may, for example, be a blue color.

The second layer of material may be formed from any material capable of having a coloration different than the first layer of material and of being placed in an adjacent relationship with said first layer of 10 material. The second layer of material suitably comprises a paper or tissue layer, a film, a woven material, a nonwoven material (such as a layer of pulp fibers), or the like. The coloration of the second layer of material can be controlled by any means known to those skilled in the art. Suitably, the second layer will be provided with 15 a coloration through the addition of pigments, dyes, fillers, printing, or the like. Of course, the first and second layers could be of materials which have natural colorations which differ.

It is also possible for the second layer of material to have multiple 20 colorations. That is, the second layer of material may, for example, be printed so as to be one color in a first area and a second color in a second area. The second layer of material may also contain printing or drawings or figures such that its coloration varies across its surface.

25 Any method of bringing the first and second layers into an adjacent relationship is suitable for use in the present invention. The first and second layers may be laid one on top of the other without being directly attached to one another across the majority of their surface. Alternatively, the first and second layers may be generally attached to one another across their entire surface. Alternatively, 30 the first and second layers may be intermittently attached to each other across their surface or may be attached to one another at their peripheries. Further, the first and second layers may be attached to one another at the same time the transparent areas are formed in the first layer, such as when the transparent areas are formed through a 35 process involving the application of heat and/or pressure. That is,

the first and second layers of material may be thermally laminated together.

In a specific embodiment, the transparent areas are formed in the 5 first layer of material in a process separate from that used to bring the second layer of material into an adjacent relationship with said first layer of material. Thus, it is generally preferred that the first layer of material and second layer of material not be co-embossed. Further, in an alternative specific embodiment, the 10 first and second layers of material are not adhesively attached to one another across their entire surfaces. If the first and second layers are adhered together, it may be desired that the adhesive pattern used to join the two layers together not directly coincide with the transparent areas of said first layer of material. That is, 15 when the first and second layers are adhesively attached, the adhesive is suitably randomly applied between the two layers of material in a manner which does not correspond to the transparent areas of the first layer of material. It is generally desired that the adhesive be colorless so as to not be visible through the 20 transparent areas of the first layer of material. Thus, the adhesive does not unacceptably interfere with viewing the second layer of material through the transparent areas of said first layer of material. It may be possible for the adhesive to comprise the second layer.

25 The present invention can be further understood from reference to the drawings wherein Fig. 1 illustrates a laminate material according to the present invention. The laminate material 10 comprises a first layer of material 12 and a second layer of material 14 adjacent and 30 in an overlapping relationship with said first layer of material. The first layer of material 12 includes opaque areas 16 and transparent areas 18. In the illustrated embodiment, the transparent areas correspond to the figures which are visible on the laminate. This aspect of the present invention can best be understood by 35 reference to Fig. 2 which is a cross-sectional view taken along line 2-2 of Fig. 1. As can be seen from reference to Fig. 2, the first layer of material comprises a nonwoven material having opaque

areas 16. The transparent areas 18 have been formed by application of thermal energy to melt the material from which the first layer 12 is formed to form filmlike areas which are transparent. The second layer of material 14 can then be viewed through the transparent areas 18 such that the figures 20 (Fig. 1) are visible on the surface of the laminate material.

The laminate materials of the present invention are suitable for use in the formation of disposable absorbent garment such as infant diapers, training pants, adult incontinence products, feminine care products, and the like. The laminates are also suitable for use in forming disposable articles such as hospital drapes and gowns, and the like. When used in the formation of disposable absorbent garments, the laminate materials of the present invention suitably form the external surface of the garment. The external surface of the garment may comprise the outer surface of the garment, when the garment is in use, or may comprise the interior surface of the garment when the garment is in use. Thus, the laminate materials of the present invention may, for example, form an inner bodyside liner or an outer liquid-impervious exterior surface.

It is generally desired that the outer surface of an absorbent garment (when in use) be liquid impermeable. Accordingly, in one embodiment of the present invention, the first layer of material comprises a fibrous nonwoven material and the second layer of material comprises a liquid-impervious film. Alternatively, the outer surface of an absorbent garment could be formed from a film/film laminate. When the laminate materials of the present invention are used for the interior surface of absorbent garments, it is generally preferred that the materials be liquid pervious. In this embodiment, the first layer of material may again comprise a fibrous nonwoven material which has been treated to be generally hydrophilic and, thus, liquid pervious, and the second layer of material comprises another liquid-pervious material such as a nonwoven material or a tissue.

Fig. 3 illustrates the laminate materials of the present invention in place as the outer surface of a disposable infant diaper.

When the laminate materials of the present invention are used as
5 illustrated in Fig. 3, as the exterior surface of an absorbent garment, the transparent areas may also serve as a wetness indicator whereby a caretaker is allowed to determine when the garment has become soiled. That is, the transparent areas of the first layer of material may allow a caretaker to visualize a color change indicating
10 that the garment has been used. Disposable absorbent garments, on which the laminate materials of the present invention may be used, are well known in the art. Suitable disposable garments are disclosed, for example, in commonly assigned U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 08/096,654 entitled, "Thin Absorbent Article Having Rapid
15 Uptake of Liquid," filed July 22, 1993, in the name of Hansen et al.; and U.S. Patent No. 5,192,606 issued March 9, 1993, to Proxmire et al.

Examples

20 **Example 1**
A first layer of material is provided. The first layer of material comprises a 1.2 mil (0.03 millimeter) microporous, white polypropylene film having a basis weight of 29 grams per square
25 meter, which film is commercially available from the 3M Company under the trade designation XK0-8044. The microporous film has a light transmission of 43 percent. The microporous film is passed through a heated embossing nip heated to about 235 degrees Fahrenheit (112°C) at a pressure of about 150 pounds per linear inch (1034 Kilopascals)
30 to form transparent areas corresponding to the embossing pattern. The transparent areas have a light transmission of 80-90 percent. The first layer of material is then placed adjacent a second layer of material comprising a blue pigmented tissue having a basis weight of about 10 grams per square meter.

Example 2

A first layer of material comprising a laminate is formed. The laminate is formed from the microporous film used in Example 1 and a 0.5-0.7 ounce per square yard (17-24 grams per square meter) 5 polypropylene spunbond material. The laminate is formed by passing the microporous film and the spunbond material through an embossing nip in which the patterned roll contacts the spunbond material and the anvil roll contacts the film material. The temperature of the pattern roll is 290-300 degrees Fahrenheit (143-149°C) and the 10 temperature of the anvil roll is 210-250 degrees Fahrenheit (99-121°C). The nip pressure is about 150 pounds per linear inch (1034 Kilopascals). Transparent areas corresponding to the embossing pattern are thus formed. The laminate thus formed serves as the 15 first layer which is placed adjacent a 0.6 mil (0.015 millimeter) 14 grams per square meter, blue pigmented, polypropylene film commercially available from Edison Plastics, South Plainfield, New Jersey 07080, under the trade designation XP-500 (Blue).

Example 3

20 A first layer of material is provided. The first layer of material comprises a polypropylene microfiber (fiber denier less than about 1.0 d) meltblown material. The first layer has a basis weight of 10, 20 or 40 grams per square meter (gsm). The light transmission of the 10 gsm material is 77 percent, of the 20 gsm material is 55 percent, 25 and of the 40 gsm material is 35 percent. These materials are passed through an embossing nip having a temperature of from about 230 degrees Fahrenheit (110°C) to about 270 degrees Fahrenheit (132°C) at a pressure of about 150 pounds per linear inch (1034 Kilopascals). Transparent areas corresponding to the embossing 30 pattern are thus formed. The transparent areas have a light transmission of about 85 to 90 percent. These material are then placed adjacent to a second layer of contrasting color such as the pigmented tissue layer of Example 1.

35 Example 4

The microfiber meltblown layers of Example 3 are used in forming laminates which form the first layer of material. The microfiber

meltblown layers of Example 3 are laminated to the 0.5 to 0.7 ounce per square yard (17-24 gsm) polypropylene spunbond material of Example 2 under the conditions set forth in Example 2. The laminated material thus formed comprises the first layer of material which is 5 then placed adjacent a second layer of material having a contrasting color.

Example 5

A first layer of material is provided. The first layer of material 10 comprises a spunbond material formed from polypropylene fibers having a denier of 1.2 d. The first layer of material has a basis weight of 24 grams per square meter or 48 grams per square meter. The 24 grams per square meter material has a light transmission of 77 percent and the 48 grams per square meter material has a light transmission of 15 65 percent. Each of the two spunbond materials are then passed through an embossing nip having a temperature of 335 to 350 degrees Fahrenheit (168-171°C) and a pressure of 200 pounds per linear inch (1379 Kilopascals). Transparent areas corresponding to the embossing pattern are thus formed. The transparent areas have a light 20 transmission of 80 to 87 percent. The first layers of material thus formed are placed adjacent a second layer of contrasting color. Those materials comprising nonwoven webs placed adjacent a tissue 25 layer could be used as bodyside liners, while those materials comprising or placed adjacent a film material could be used as outer covers in absorbent garments.

While the invention has been described in detail with respect to specific embodiments thereof, it will be appreciated that those skilled in the art, upon attaining an understanding of the foregoing, 30 may readily conceive of alterations to, variations of, and equivalents to these embodiments. Accordingly, the scope of the present invention should be assessed as that of the appended claims and any equivalents thereto.

CLAIMS

1. A laminate material comprising:
a first layer of material having opaque areas,
5 transparent areas and a coloration; and
a second layer of material adjacent said first
layer of material, said second layer of material having
a different coloration from said first layer of material
whereby the coloration of said second layer of material
10 is visible through said transparent areas of said first
layer of material to a greater extent than through said
opaque areas of said first layer of material.
2. The laminate material according to claim 1 wherein
15 said first layer of material is a fibrous nonwoven
material.
3. The laminate material according to claim 1 or 2
wherein said opaque areas have a high surface area
20 relative to said transparent areas.
4. The laminate material according to claim 1, 2 or 3
wherein said transparent areas are filmlike.
- 25 5. The laminate material according to any preceding
claim wherein said opaque areas have a light
transmission of less than about 80 percent.
- 30 6. The laminate material according to any preceding
claim wherein said opaque areas have a light
transmission of less than about 40 percent.
- 35 7. The laminate material according to any of claims 1
to 4 wherein said opaque areas have a light transmission
of from about 40 to about 70 percent.
8. The laminate material according to any preceding

claim wherein said transparent areas have a light transmission of at least about 50 percent.

9. The laminate material according to any preceding
5 claim wherein said transparent areas have a light transmission of at least about 80 percent.

10. The laminate material according to any preceding
claim wherein said first layer of material is a film.

11. The laminate material according to claim 10 wherein
10 said film is embossed such that the opaque areas have a high surface area relative to said transparent areas.

15 12. The laminate material according to any preceding
claim wherein said transparent areas have a light transmission which is at least 10 percent greater than
the light transmission of said opaque areas.

20 13. The laminate material according to any preceding
claim wherein said transparent areas have a light transmission which is at least 20 percent greater than
the light transmission of said opaque areas.

25 14. The laminate material according to any preceding
claim wherein said first layer of material and said
second layer of material are intermittently joined
together by an adhesive.

30 15. The laminate material according to any preceding
claim wherein said second layer is not visible through
said opaque areas of said first layer of material.

35 16. The laminate material according to any preceding
claim wherein said opaque areas have a surface area of
at least about 0.3 square meters per gram.

17. The laminate material according to any preceding claim wherein said opaque areas have a surface area of at least about 0.5 square meters per gram.

5 18. The laminate material according to any preceding claim wherein said opaque areas have a surface area of at least about 0.6 square meters per gram.

10 19. The laminate material according to any preceding claim wherein said opaque areas have a surface area of about 0.6 to about 1.5 square meters per gram.

20. A laminate material comprising:
15 a first layer of a nonwoven material having fibrous opaque areas, filmlike transparent areas and a coloration, said transparent areas being formed by application of thermal energy to said nonwoven material; and
20 a second layer of material adjacent said first layer of material, said second layer of material having a different coloration from said first layer of material whereby the coloration of said second layer is visible through said transparent areas of said first layer of material to a greater extent than through said opaque areas of said first layer of material.

25 21. The laminate material according to claim 20 wherein said opaque areas have a light transmission of less than about 80 percent and said transparent areas have a light transmission of at least about 50 percent.

30 22. The laminate material according to claim 20 or 21 wherein said opaque areas have a high surface area relative to said transparent areas.

35 23. A disposable absorbent garment, said garment comprising:

a bodyside liner;

an outer cover comprising a laminate material, said laminate material comprising:

5 a first layer of material having opaque areas, transparent areas and a coloration; and

10 a second layer of material adjacent said first layer of material, said second layer of material having a different coloration from said first layer of material whereby the coloration of said second layer of material is visible through said transparent areas of said first layer of material to a greater extent than through said opaque areas of said first layer of material; and

15 an absorbent core located between said bodyside liner and said outer cover.

24. The absorbent garment according to claim 23 wherein said first layer of material is a fibrous nonwoven material.

20

25. The absorbent garment according to claim 23 or 24 wherein said opaque areas have a high surface area relative to said transparent areas.

25

26. The absorbent garment according to claim 23, 24 or 25 wherein said transparent areas are filmlike.

30

27. The absorbent garment according to any of claims 23 to 26 wherein said opaque areas have a light transmission of less than about 80 percent.

35

28. The absorbent garment according to any of claims 23 to 27 wherein said opaque areas have a light transmission of from about 40 to about 70 percent.

29. The absorbent garment according to any of claims 23 to 27 wherein said opaque areas have a light

transmission of less than about 40 percent.

30. The absorbent garment according to any of claims 23 to 29 wherein said transparent areas have a light
5 transmission of at least about 50 percent.

31. The absorbent garment according to any of claims 23 to 30 wherein said transparent areas have a light transmission of at least about 80 percent.

10 32. The absorbent garment according to any of claims 23 to 31 wherein said first layer and said second layer of material are joined to each other by an adhesive.

15 33. The absorbent garment according to any of claims 23 to 32 wherein said first layer of material and said second layer of material are not co-embossed.

20 34. The absorbent garment according to any of claims 23 to 33 wherein said opaque areas have a surface area of at least about 0.3 square meters per gram.

25 35. The absorbent garment according to any of claims 23 to 34 wherein said opaque areas have a surface area of at least about 0.5 square meters per gram.

30 36. The absorbent garment according to any of claims 23 to 35 wherein said opaque areas have a surface area of about 0.6 to about 1.5 square meters per gram.

37. A disposable absorbent comprising:
a bodyside liner;
an outer cover comprising a laminated material,
said laminated material comprising:
a first layer of nonwoven material having
fibrous opaque areas, filmlike transparent areas
and a coloration, said transparent areas being

formed by application of thermal energy to said nonwoven material; and

5 a second layer of material adjacent said first layer of material, said second layer of material having a different coloration from said first layer of material whereby the coloration of said second layer is visible through said transparent areas of said first layer of material to a greater extent than through said opaque areas of said first layer of material; and

10

an absorbent core located between said bodyside liner and said outer cover.

38. A disposable absorbent garment comprising:

15

a bodyside liner comprising a laminated material, said laminated material comprising:

a first layer of material having opaque areas, transparent areas and a coloration; and

20 a second layer of material adjacent said first layer of material, said second layer of material having a different coloration from said first layer of material whereby the coloration of said second layer of material is visible through said transparent areas of said first layer of material to a greater extent than through said opaque areas of said first layer of material;

25

an outer cover; and

an absorbent core located between said bodyside liner and said outer cover.

30

39. A disposable absorbent garment comprising:

35

a bodyside liner comprising a laminated material, said laminated material comprising:

a first layer of nonwoven material having fibrous opaque areas, filmlike transparent areas and a coloration, said transparent areas being formed by application of thermal energy to said

nonwoven material; and

5 a second layer of material adjacent said first layer of material, said second layer of material having a different coloration from said first layer of material whereby the coloration of said second layer of material is visible through said transparent areas of said first layer of material to a greater extent than through said opaque areas of said first layer of material;

10 an outer cover; and

an absorbent core located between said bodyside liner and said outer cover.

15 40. Laminate materials substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

41. Disposable absorbent garments substantially as hereinbefore described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

Patents Act 1977**Examiner's report to the Comptroller under Section 17
(The Search report)**21**Application number**
GB 9519647.3**Relevant Technical Fields**

(i) UK CI (Ed.N) B5N, B6J (JB2, JB7)

(ii) Int CI (Ed.6) B29C 59/04, B32B 3/26, 3/30;
B41M 5/124

Search Examiner
R J MIRAMS**Databases (see below)**

(i) UK Patent Office collections of GB, EP, WO and US patent specifications.

Date of completion of Search
18 DECEMBER 1995

(ii) ONLINE: WPI, CLAIMS

Documents considered relevant following a search in respect of Claims :-
1 TO 41

Categories of documents

X: Document indicating lack of novelty or of inventive step.

P: Document published on or after the declared priority date but before the filing date of the present application.

Y: Document indicating lack of inventive step if combined with one or more other documents of the same category.

E: Patent document published on or after, but with priority date earlier than, the filing date of the present application.

A: Document indicating technological background and/or state of the art.

&: Member of the same patent family; corresponding document.

Category	Identity of document and relevant passages	Relevant to claim(s)
X	GB 1265483 A (AVIV PLASTICS) whole document	at least 1, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 15
X	GB 1070514 A (PRINCETON) eg. page 2 lines 100 to 122	at least 1, 3, 4, 5, 10, 11, 12, 15

Databases: The UK Patent Office database comprises classified collections of GB, EP, WO and US patent specifications as outlined periodically in the Official Journal (Patents). The on-line databases considered for search are also listed periodically in the Official Journal (Patents).

**This Page is Inserted by IFW Indexing and Scanning
Operations and is not part of the Official Record**

BEST AVAILABLE IMAGES

Defective images within this document are accurate representations of the original documents submitted by the applicant.

Defects in the images include but are not limited to the items checked:

- BLACK BORDERS**
- IMAGE CUT OFF AT TOP, BOTTOM OR SIDES**
- FADED TEXT OR DRAWING**
- BLURRED OR ILLEGIBLE TEXT OR DRAWING**
- SKEWED/SLANTED IMAGES**
- COLOR OR BLACK AND WHITE PHOTOGRAPHS**
- GRAY SCALE DOCUMENTS**
- LINES OR MARKS ON ORIGINAL DOCUMENT**
- REFERENCE(S) OR EXHIBIT(S) SUBMITTED ARE POOR QUALITY**
- OTHER:** _____

IMAGES ARE BEST AVAILABLE COPY.

As rescanning these documents will not correct the image problems checked, please do not report these problems to the IFW Image Problem Mailbox.